

One passage may be related to a New Testament text. The Hebrew Text of Ps 68:18, 'You have ascended on high, taken captives, accepted gifts among men . . .' (in Stec's rendering) is paraphrases as: 'You ascended to the firmament, O prophet Moses. . . you taught the words of the Law, you gave them as gifts to the sons of men . . .'. The targumic paraphrase recalls that in Eph 4:8, with reference to Christ giving gifts to humanity (men). In his note to the text Stec draws attention to a similar interpretation in the *Midrash on*

Psalms to this verse, making New Testament contact with a general rabbinic interpretative tradition, rather than direct contact with Targum Psalms, likely.

David Stec's fine work is a welcome contribution to the 'Aramaic Bible' series; a work for the shelves of biblical and theological libraries, and for those interested in the Aramaic targumic tradition.

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Jerusalem against Rome (International Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion #7). By Mireille Hadas-Lebel, trans. by Robyn Frechet. Pp. xix, 581, Leuven/Dudley, MA, Peeters, 2006, \$109.00.

Mireille Hadas-Lebel is professor of Ancient History and Religious Studies at the Sorbonne. This is the translation of the second edition of her massive '*thèse d'Etat*' of 1987, and it is difficult to imagine it being superseded as our most penetrating and well-documented exposition of the trajectory of the image of Rome in Jewish literature from the time of the Maccabees to the dawn of the Christian era. The quality and depth of her scholarship is staggering. Not only has she mastered the languages basic to such a study (Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic), but she has worked her way through the immense corpus of the Talmud and the Midrash, likened in Hebrew to an ocean where, as she writes, without a total immersion 'the language of its texts with their specific imagery, their multiple internal references, and suspended discussions remain impenetrable.' (p. vii)

Because Rome supported the Jews in the conflict with their hereditary enemy, Syria, she was at first viewed positively by the inhabitants of Judaea and their Diaspora brethren. In 63 B.C.E. Pompey supported Hyrcanus in his struggle against his brother Aristobulus for the throne; Pompey was victorious, but he made what the Jews saw as a terrible blunder: he entered the Temple, accompanied by a large retinue. As Josephus says, Pompey thus saw 'what it was unlawful for any but the high priests to see.' (p. 22) From this point the image of Rome began to turn, darkening as the Republic gave way to the Empire, and Rome's ways became more grasping and coarse, her subjection more cruel. In effect both Rome and Judaea thought of themselves as special, as chosen by God or Fate; they thus became bitter rivals, neither one of whom would back down. Judaea was defeated in its three revolts, but rather than psychologically capitulating, its simmering resentment took the form of a *Samizdat* literature by which the defeated people

denounced, mocked, and fantasized an eschatological revenge and deliverance from the dominating power. After the destruction of the Temple, and the later cruel way Hadrian put down the Bar Kokhba rebellion, Jewish obsession with and hatred for Rome reached a pitch of intensity non-Jews have difficulty appreciating. Rome became the new 'Edom-Esau' which his fraternal rival, 'Jacob-Judah', had to put down to come into his rightful inheritance. A powerful contribution of this study, reinforcing the disturbing thesis that Israel Jacob Yuval put forward recently, is that, with the rise of the apocalyptic world-view in which terrible sufferings must precede and usher in the messianic era, some Jews became so exasperated with their condition and desperate in their plight that they took one more step: they deliberately attacked their more powerful tormentors and committed atrocities against their fellow (but more moderate) Jews, not to make them fight but as an inverted recipe to force the appearance of the messianic age. That is, they saw this apparent self-destruction as creating the appalling sufferings required to hasten the coming of the kingdom and compelling the Almighty to intervene (pp. 439-489). This suicidal strategy emerged from an exasperation with their deity, whose good name they had been defending by interpreting their torments as justifiable punishment for unfaithfulness, but whom they now turned upon by using the apocalyptic formula as reverse leverage to pressure him to break his protracted silence and inactivity and fulfil his side of the bargain. There is thus a theurgic or magical, as well as scandalous or sacrilegious rationale behind what otherwise can only be viewed as a baffling option for self-destruction.

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Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: the Reception of Enochic Literature. By Annette Yoshiko Reed. Pp. xii, 318, Cambridge University Press, 2005, \$75.00.

When in 1773 a compilation of Enochic epigrapha, canonical in the Ethiopian Church, was brought to the

West by James Bruce, a window was thrown open to the fascinating diversity of pre-canonical Second

Temple Judaism (536 BCE – 70 CE) for the first time. This document, now known as *1 Enoch*, was soon joined by a related compilation preserved in Slavonic (2 *Enoch*), and later by the discovery of Greek manuscripts and, at Qumran, Aramaic fragments of some parts of *1 Enoch*. These discoveries initiated a scholarly attempt to unravel the complicated history of the production, reception, and changes in interpretation of these texts, as they moved from Jewish to Christian hands, and during the Middle Ages back again, together with the related enterprise of resurrecting the 'worlds' that gave them birth, revered them, and later excluded them when a 'canon' of authoritative scriptures was set up first by Rabbinic Judaism and later by the ecclesiarchs of Roman Christianity. Reed has isolated one unit, the so-called *Book of the Watchers* (*1 Enoch* 1–36), which dates from the third century BCE, meditated deeply on what it tells us about pre-Rabbinic Judaism, and traced its influence down to its sudden re-emergence in Jewish Merkabah mysticism in the *Zohar* and the Hekhalot macroform 3 *Enoch*. Thorough in her research, she combines the untrammelled curiosity and provocative intelligence of youth with the patient, unhurried style, balanced view, and maturity of judgment we associate with a scholar many years her senior. The book of *Genesis* lists Enoch as one of the antediluvian patriarchs, the father of Methuselah, but unlike the others he is twice said to have 'walked with God', and perhaps did not taste death, 'for God took him' (5:12, 24). In speaking about the proliferation of wickedness that prompted God to send the Flood, *Genesis* mentions 'sons of God' who took wives among human women, and produced a race of giants (6:1–4). The *Book of the Watchers* is an exegesis and expansion of these snippets. Enoch has a heavenly ascent where special revelations are granted him; the 'sons of God' are interpreted as rebellious angels (an early version and preparation for the definitive combat recounted in *Revelation*) who fall to earth to have sexual relations with human women and, like Samson, disastrously reveal to their paramours secrets that belong only in the supernatural sphere; from this illicit instruction human wickedness proceeds. Enoch and the angels are symmetrical figures, each doing the opposite of what the other does; the effect is

to produce an alternative account of the origin of evil from the disobedience of Adam and Eve. This one releases humans from responsibility, for evil is traced back to the angelic rebellion.

Reed is persuasive in creating the *Sitz im Leben* that shaped each stage in the creation and development of this legend. She appreciates the *Book of the Watchers* as an apocalypse, or 'revealed wisdom', using traditional Mesopotamian material and emanating from the same priestly scribal circles that produced Ben Sira, but unlike the latter invoking and approving cosmological speculation as displaying the power and order of the creator, evoking piety and serving as a foundation for ethical behaviour. The later units with which it is anthologized in *1 Enoch* take a different slant, however, 'to console the persecuted righteous with eschatological prophecies about the imminent destruction of Israel's enemies, which include foreigners who attack the nation no less than those Jews said to corrupt it from within. In other words, these texts speak eloquently to the events surrounding the Maccabean revolt, when Antiochus IV disrupted the Temple cult and proscribed elements of the traditional practices of Judaism, possibly with some initial support from Hellenized elites among the Jewish populace.' (p. 60) With the fall of the Temple, both Rabbinic Jews and the Jesus movement attempted 'to define and delineate the boundaries of the chosen people', which required both 'to reconceptualize the diversity of Judaism as a struggle between normativity and deviance' (p. 125). The Rabbis reasserted the primacy of Torah and suppressed the Enochic legend, not out of loyalty to the Adam and Eve account or to underline human responsibility for evil, but in a desperate, life-or-death struggle to seize the fallen mantle of 'Israel' and undercut rival claimants. The 'parting of the ways' occurred considerably later than is conventionally believed, and when it did it was because Rabbinic Jews seized authority and expunged from their 'canon' Jewish texts which threatening rivals – such as the Jesus movement – were invoking to defend their claim to the same identity and status.

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Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables. Edited by Gabriele Boccaccini. Pp. xv, 555, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids/Cambridge, 2007, £27.99/\$50.00

The scholarly exploration of Second Temple Judaism has grown from a trickle into a river in full spate. It is now clear that, due to the hopes raised by the Maccabean revolt and betrayed by the later Hasmonean high priests – who function as a kind of Jewish analogue to the Borgia Popes – and further dashed by the occupation of the heavy-handed and heavy-taxing Romans, many Jews in Palestine stood lightly toward their single deity and their traditional institutions of covenant, law, and Temple. Such was their sense of

oppression, their psychological need for a new 'consolation of Israel' and bulwark against despair, that many confessed themselves to be living at 'the end of the aeon', after which they projected an apocalyptic reversal of the present intolerable conditions. There appear to have developed 'alternative Judaisms' during this period, as the high priests and traditional elite were viewed by many to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Some of this revolutionary ferment boiled over into outright